(c) The Department of Agriculture and Cooperation provides financial assistance under central sector scheme of mushroom production to the State Governments for the following components.

(a) Establishment of Spawn Production Units (Rs. 11.50 lakhs/unit)

(b) Establishment of Pasteurised Compost Units (Rs. 28.50 lakh/unit)

(c) Training of farmers (Rs. 500/- per farmer). During the current year, states have been allocated Rs. 475 lakhs under the scheme. National Horticulture Board under DAC also provides Soft Loan assistance to the extent of Rs. one crore to private public and cooperatives. National Centre for Mushroom Research and Training (NCMRT) is a premier research institute of ICAR engaged in research for evolving different strains of mushroom and perfecting production techniques for commercial purposes. The Ministry of Food Processing Industries also provides financial assistance for setting up of integrated projects of mushroom under its plan scheme of development of infrastructural facilities. APEDA under the Ministry of Commerce is engaged in creating necessary infrastructure for export of perishable horticulture produce including mushroom, in collaboration with Airports Authority of India and other government agencies.

(d) and (e) The central sector scheme of mushroom production has been continued as per VIII Plan guidelines, for the first two years of IX Plan. According to NCMRT estimates, the production of mushroom is likely to cross one lakh tonnes by the end of IX Plan.

Shortfall in the Production of Pulses

317. SHRI ABANI ROY:
SHRI RAJNATH SINGH SURYA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the prices of pulses are likely to face the onion way during the next few months;

(b) if so, whether there has been any shortfall in the production of pulses in the country;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to boost the production of pulses or to face the shortage of pulses in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) The prices of pulses are not showing any rising trend in the last one month. The prices may go down further with the arrival of the Tur & other pulse crops in the market in the next few months.

(b) The production of pulses in the country in the last 3 years is given below:

1996-97	14.25 million tonnes	
1997-98	13.07	-do-
1998-99	14.78	-do- (likely)

(c) The reasons for non-increase of pulse production include;

(i) Cultivation of pulses is less remunerative than that of cereals such as wheat and rice and oilseeds or of other commercial crops. The farmers, therefore divert the better lands and resources or the cultivation of latter.

(ii) Pulses are raised under rainfed conditions on marginal and submarginal lands, which are poor in fertility.

(iii) The varieties available at present are susceptiable to a number of disease like yellow mosaic and powdery mildew in Moong, Urad and Cowpea, sterility mosaic in arhar and wilt and blight in gram reducing the yield. They are also vulnerable to termites and susceptible to pests.

(iv) No major break-through has been achieved in pulse production technology and improvement of high yielding germ plasm. The varieties

evolved in pulses have got narrow adaptability and, therefore, the farmer has to manage within the limited range of varieties for different seasons and agro-climatic conditions.

(v) The production of pulses in summer is affected by stray cattle and Blue Bull, which damage pulse crops such as Arhar, moong and urad more than any other crop.

(d) To enhance the pulse production in the country, pulses have been brought under the Technology Mission on Oilseeds & Pulses. A scheme of National Pulses Development Project is being implemented for this purpose. Under the scheme, assistance is being provided for critical inputs like production & distribution of seeds, seed minikits, improved farm implements rhyzobium culture, micro-nutrients, Integrated Pest Management and distribution of sprinkler sets etc. In addition, frontline and block demonstrations are also organised on farmers' fields for transfer of technology.

Assistance for Milk Supply Scheme in Assam

318. SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have extended any assistance for ensuring supply of healthy milk to the urban population of different States in North-East in general and Assam in particular;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Government of India has approved Integrated Dairy Development Projects (IDDP) in all states of North East for overall development of dairying in the region. The projects also envisage hygienic processing and marketing of milk for urban consumers.

A statement giving list of projects approved, year of approval and total approved outlays is enclosed.

Statement

Statement indicating year of approval and approved outlays of Integrated Dairy Development Projects sanctioned in North Eastern states

Sl. No.	Name of the State	Project	Year of Approval	Approved outlay Amount in Rs. Lakh
1.	Arunachal	I	1993-94	458.50
2.	Assam	I	1994-95	1260.76
3.	Manipur	I	1993-94	224.10
4.	Meghalaya	I	1994-95	141.29
5.	Mizoram	I	1993-94	367.99
	Mizoram	II	1995-96	349.19
6.	Nagaland	I	1993-94	668.22
	Nagaland	II	1998-99	347.49
7.	Tripura	I	1993-94	304.90
	Tripura	II	1994-95	319.51
	TOTAL			4441.95